Turning Trash into Treasure

By Dan Hairfield, Assistant Coordinator for South Campus Administrative Operations and Michael Melnyk, North Hill Community Resident Director

In 2011-2012, Resident Life’s Sustainability Committee embarked on a new adventure to revitalize a donation collection program that started in 2003. Originally spearheaded by Cindy Felice, Don’t Waste… Donate served as an initiative to divert items from the waste stream into donations to local charities during move out. Partnered with the Residence Hall Association and the Student Government Association, the program remained relatively small-scale from 2004 to 2009, until the student groups advocated for a newly structured and expanded effort. Though a name change to Trash to Treasure helped bring new life to the program, there was still room to grow.

During fall 2011, a group of five members of the Sustainability Committee (Dennis Scott, Craig Leets, Tracy Kiras, Michael Melnyk and Dan Hairfield) aimed to take this program to the next level. These staff members conducted research and examined successful efforts at other institutions. With the goal of increasing the scope of collections, the committee applied for and received a $10,000 grant from the UMD Office of Sustainability. This plan included new branding and advertising, expanded collection sites across campus and continued student involvement. To ensure this program’s success, the committee collaborated with the following on-campus partners: Residential Facilities, Facilities Management, Dining Services, and Transportation Services.

Besides the expansion of collection sites, changes were designed to create a more organized, visible collection effort. Internal sites were designated near residence hall service desks, using grant money to purchase carts for each of the stations. PODs were placed in four centralized locations on South Campus to supplement the three internal locations available students. A volunteer opportunity was created to invite members of the university community to help staff the collection sites. A new logo was also created to provide more flair for the donation sites and advertising.

In the end, the week-long collection was a huge success! Collected items were given to the Greater DC Goodwill, which collected approximately 5810 cubic feet of donations. Imagine 6 box trucks and a tractor trailer full of clothing, small appliances, and furniture. Seventy-five cubic feet of food

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donations were collected for the Help by Phone charity within the Capital Area Food Bank. And, thanks to the partnership with Facilities Management, the program also diverted 2.5 dumpsters worth of carpets to ACE recycling and 5 box trucks worth of electronics to Terrapin Trader.

The dedicated efforts of those department staff, committee members, and volunteers provided residents with an opportunity to make a difference. For 2013, Facilities Management’s Mindful Moveout campaign is merging with Trash to Treasure in an effort to streamline collection efforts. The 2013 Trash to Treasure planning committee includes staff from Resident Life, Facilities Management, Residential Facilities, Transportation Services, Fraternity and Sorority Life, and Capstone On-Campus Management. With the goal of continuing to expand the program, social media has been added to promote more student awareness and participation, as well as a revamped volunteer signup program with training videos.

To find out more information about Trash to Treasure 2013, visit www.reslife.umd.edu/trashtotreasure.

Where are they now?
Spotlight on UMD DRL Alumni

Recently, we caught up with several UMD DRL Alumni to learn a bit more about them and what they’ve been up to since graduation. We hope you enjoy learning a bit more about your fellow alumni!

Sabrina Starkman

What year did you graduate from the University of Maryland?
2011

What positions did you hold in Resident Life while at Maryland?
I was a Community Assistant in Hagerstown Hall from 2008-2009, a Resident Assistant in Elkton Hall from 2009-2011, and a Resident Coordinator in Elkton Hall from 2010-2011.

What are you up to currently?
I’m earning my Master’s in Social Work part-time at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, NJ and will graduate in May 2014. I’m focusing on clinical social work and college student mental health. My current field placement is at the Rutgers University Office of the Dean of Students, where I work with their social worker coordinating the campus threat assessment team and doing case management for high-risk students. I work for Rutgers Housing and Residence Life as a Graduate Hall Director for Katzenbach Hall, a four-story first-year all-female residence hall with 4 RAs that’s part of Douglass Residential College, a women’s residential college program that focuses on providing enhanced leadership and educational opportunities for the undergraduate students. I also work as the administrative assistant for the Rutgers Doctorate in Social Work Program and am involved with the Tyler Clementi Center, a new research center focused on vulnerable youth transitioning from home to college.

Favorite Memory:
One of my favorite memories is from the snowstorm during finals in December 2009 when the latest exams were canceled and all of the residents were encouraged to go home before the storm. The snowed-in Elkton RAs went out to the hill on the side of the Comcast Center and went sledding with lids from plastic storage bins. It was fun impromptu staff bonding! It really was the relationships with my residents, my RA staff, and the professional staff in the Denton Community that were my favorite parts of working for Resident Life.

Lessons Learned:
A lot of the lessons that I learned in Resident Life are still very applicable in my daily life since I still work in the residence halls. One of the most valuable lessons that I learned was the impact of a good supervisor. I was lucky to have a wonderful mentoring experience from my supervisor Lisa Alexander, the current RD of Oakland Hall, who helped me develop into a strong RA and support me in my transition to being a hall director. Through her role modeling and leadership, I have fostered positive supervisory and mentoring relationships with my RAs during the past two years that have made my time as a hall director extremely rewarding. Knowing the tremendous impact that you can have as a supervisor is something I take to heart and use in my work on a daily basis.
Andrew Dupree

What year did you graduate from the University of Maryland?
2011

What positions did you hold in Resident Life while at Maryland?
I was an RA for five semesters—three in Queen Anne’s Hall and two in Anne Arundel. DAQSS for life!

What are you up to currently?
These days I am working on a Master’s degree in Electrical Engineering at Stanford University. I hope to work in mobile computer hardware for a while, and eventually in the design and creation of technology for developing countries.

Favorite Memory:
Working as an RA gives you an opportunity to have a really meaningful impact on someone’s life. One of my favorite memories has to be when three of my freshmen presented me with a small gift during the spring semester, and told me I’d been instrumental in helping them have a great start to their college experience.

Lessons Learned:
Trite though it may sound, never underestimate the power small acts of caring and kindness can have to make people feel valued and appreciated.

Alumni News Notes

Cindy Felice, after 15 years of service to the Department of Resident Life, transitioned from her Associate Director position in Resident Life to become the new Associate Director for Services with the UMD Department of Residential Facilities. We miss you, Cindy, but we are so thankful to continue to have close ties to you as a great new colleague in Residential Facilities. Congratulations on the new role!

Mark Ferne was recently named Associate Provost for Student Development (in addition to his Dean of Students role) at Westminster College.

Mike Fried is now the Director for Retention, Analysis, and Assessment in the Division for Student Success at Pace University. Congratulations, Mike!

Lori Ganey and her husband Tom share that the Terp tradition continues in her family. Her daughter, Lindsey, is finishing up her first year at Maryland and is very involved in campus as a member of CIVICUS and a student employee with the Division of IT. Lori and Tom’s son Jake will also officially make his debut as a member of the Maryland family when he starts his freshmen year with us in August, pursuing a degree in Journalism! The Terp spirit is strong with the Ganey family—Jake and Lindsey will be joined on campus this Fall by two of their Ganey cousins! Go Ganey Terps!

Jeff Grim has been selected to be a Resident Director for the Semester at Sea program this coming Summer. Congratulations, Jeff!

Kait and Chris Keelan (Class of 2007) report that their little Terp was born on February 26th and she was swaddled in a Maryland flag not even 24 hours after she was born. The pictures of Maryland’s newest Terp fan were taken when she was 10 days old. We are very excited to bring her to her first Maryland Day this year!

Trisha Lay and her partner Katie Shannon welcomed Eleanor Diane Shannon-Lay into the world on November 28, 2012. Everyone is doing well and adjusting to life as a family of three. Trisha also accepted the 4-WORK Service Center Manager position and transitioned from Resident Life to Residential Facilities in early January. While leaving Resident Life was bittersweet for Trisha, she’s very happy to still be working on campus where she can visit with her DRL family whenever she wants.

Joey Price, former RA and CA in the Denton Community and currently CEO of Jumpstart: HR, shared that his company has organized the first annual “Spring Forward/Give Back” Charity Dinner at Sorso Café in Baltimore. The event features an opportunity to give to three local youth-focused charities on April 27, 2013. For more information, please visit charmcitygivesback.eventbrite.com

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Jennifer Markey Reed (2008) of Greensboro, Md. and her husband Timothy welcomed a baby boy, Connor Jacob Reed, on March 21, 2013. He joins big brother Jason at home.

Joel R. Spivack, Esquire of the Law Office of Joel R. Spivack, located in Cherry Hill, New Jersey has been honored with the Martindale-Hubbell Client Distinction Award. The Award is based on Client Review Ratings in the categories of communications ability, responsiveness, quality of service, and value for money. Congratulations, Joel!

UMD Resident Life Staff Transitions

The Department of Resident Life at the University of Maryland is thrilled to welcome the following staff members to our team:

Joshua Beeson, Coordinator for South Campus Administrative Operations

Amanda Bogdan, Assistant Coordinator for North Campus Administrative Operations

Linda Dye, Public Inquiry Coordinator

Nicole Mehta, Program Director for Common Ground Multicultural Peer Dialogue Program

Please join us in congratulating the following Resident Life staff members on their transitions to new positions in our department:

Linh Nguyen, IT Manager for Network and User Support

Announcements and Updates

Staff recognized by Get RADICAL Women’s Conference

Our own Tosh Patterson, Assistant Director of Resident Life for South Campus, was recently honored with a Shining Star Award at the 5th annual Get RADICAL Women’s Conference held the weekend of March 22-24, at the Hyatt Regency in Reston, Virginia. Congratulations, Tosh!

Join Us for Maryland Day 2013

Maryland Day 2013 is April 27, 2013! We hope you’ll join us for a fun day filled with activities for the whole family. Please also stop by the DRL Alumni and Staff Ice Cream social from 12 Noon-1 pm in the Annapolis Hall Multipurpose Room! For more information, visit www.marylandday.umd.edu

Social Media

The Department of Resident Life has ventured into the world of social media. We invite you to:

- Like us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/UMDReslife
- Follow us on Twitter: @UMDReslife
- Visit our YouTube Channel: www.youtube.com/umdreslife
- View us on Instagram: instagram.com/UMDReslife

Staying in touch

If you have news you’d like to share for the next newsletter, or need to update your contact information or know of other UMD Resident Life Alumni who haven’t yet joined our network, please contact Dennis Passarella-George at dgeorge@umd.edu or 301.314.7484.

Visit the DRL Alumni site for updated information:

www.reslife.umd.edu/alumni/